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# Hospital mum on Casey condition

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A news blackout was imposed Monday on the condition of ex-CIA chief William Casey — last reported in critical condition at a New York hospital.

Casey, operated on for a brain tumor Dec. 15, entered Glen Cove Community Hospital Sunday with pneumonia.

Casey, 74, was at his Long Is-

land home when he became ill.

Both the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Tower Commission have identified Casey as a major figure in the Iran-contra arms scandal.

Casey's latest illness came as the special Senate Iran-contra panel weighed whether to have doctors determine if he was well enough to testify.

Casey testified in November to the Intelligence Committee

and was set for more appearances when he suffered a seizure in December.

Since then, investigators have accepted that Casey probably can't testify — but say there will be gaps without his testimony. Among them:

■ Former national security adviser Robert McFarlane says he asked Casey about news reports of Israeli arms shipments to Iran — prior to

1985. Casey said "they were not" true, McFarlane testified.

Later testimony showed Casey knew of the shipments.

■ Deputy CIA Director Robert Gates testified that Casey knew of possible diversion of funds to contras last October. Casey didn't mention the diversion in November testimony.

Casey's role was called "unresolved" in the Intelligence Committee's Jan. 29 report.